

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Consolidated Plan

Citizen Participation Plan

CDBG FUNDING

Beginning in 2014, the City of Walla Walla will receive an annual allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In accordance with federal guidelines, CDBG funds are provided to projects that meet a national objective and carry out a CDBG eligible activity. There are three (3) national objectives: 1) benefiting low and moderate persons; 2) preventing or eliminating slums and blight; and 3) meeting urgent needs. While the amount available for allocation varies from year to year, the City of Walla Walla's CDBG allocation for 2014 is estimated to be \$268,000.

The CDBG allocation must focus on projects benefitting low and moderate income persons. Toward that end, the City of Walla Walla is developing a CDBG Consolidated Plan which will include a needs assessment and market analysis outlining levels of need in the areas of affordable housing, homelessness, special needs, and community development. This information forms the basis of a strategic plan to address priority needs given available funding and local capacity to carry out the activities. Development of the CDBG Consolidated Plan is guided by a Citizen Participation Plan (CPP).

PURPOSE OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

The purpose of the CPP is to provide for and encourage broad citizen involvement in development of the CDBG Consolidated Plan; any substantial amendments to the CDBG Consolidated Plan; and performance and evaluation reporting.

The CPP encourages the representative participation of all citizens within the City of Walla Walla including racially and ethnically diverse populations; non-English speaking persons; youth; and those with disabilities. The CPP is designed especially to encourage participation by low and moderate income persons, particularly residents of predominantly low and moderate income neighborhoods as determined by the City of Walla Walla.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A CITIZEN ADVISORY GROUP (CAG)

A Citizen Advisory Group comprised of elected officials, community leaders and at least one low to moderate income resident will be formed to review the needs assessment and market analysis and consider the input of city staff, residents, and agencies in the areas of decent housing; a suitable living environment; and economic opportunities for

low and moderate income residents. A minimum of five (5) persons to a maximum of nine (9) persons will be selected to serve on the CAG; members will be appointed by Council. Membership may include representatives from such entities as Walla Walla City Council; Walla Walla School District; Port of Walla Walla; Walla Walla County Human Services Department; the housing industry, and citizens at-large. Potential sub-recipients of funds will be ineligible to serve on the advisory group.

The Citizen Advisory Group will provide guidance and recommendations to City Council for identifying strategies and allocating funds. The CAG may also serve in the review of the annual CDBG Performance Evaluation; substantive amendments to the Consolidated Plan; and development of the Annual Action Plan to address future needs.

LEAD AGENCY

The Lead Agency for development of the CDBG Consolidated Plan is the City of Walla Walla; its Support Services Department administers the CDBG program.

Contact information:

City of Walla Walla

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WALLA WALLA URBAN AREA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Walla Walla Urban Area Comprehensive Plan 2007 Review and Update is the culmination of extensive community involvement in the development of a 20-year vision for Walla Walla and its urban area. An extensive series of events were held by the Comprehensive Planning Steering Committee and city staff to elicit citizen participation and input on issues. Over 500 people were involved in events including neighborhood walks and four facilitated neighborhood public meetings. Public input was also gathered using vision sessions; focus groups; a community survey; and public hearings.

Elements of the Comprehensive Plan include Community Character; Environment and Natural Resources; Land Use; Population and Housing; Economic Vitality; Commercial Retail Community; Utilities; Transportation; Capital and Community Facilities and Parks and Recreation. The planning process addressed these categories in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. That process included a review of

existing conditions for each of these same elements, and resulted in established goals, objectives, policies and a strategic plan for implementation.

The Comprehensive Plan and its broad public input will be a major tool in development of the CDBG Consolidated Plan and its strategic plan for addressing the needs of low and moderate income residents and neighborhoods. The CDBG Consolidated Plan will focus on issues such as affordable housing; homelessness; economic development; special needs; and community development and neighborhood public safety needs.

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

Activities to enhance citizen participation in development of the CDBG planning process include:

- City staff will announce the Consolidated Plan process and may publish periodic updates via the city's website and utility bill inserts.
- City staff will meet with key agencies and community organizations serving the needs of low and moderate income residents.
- In conjunction with organizations such as Commitment to Community, city staff may provide outreach and/or hold meetings specifically in neighborhoods defined as low and moderate income.
- The city may conduct a citizen survey of community development needs and city service satisfaction.
- The city will conduct a minimum of two public hearings per year to obtain citizens' views and to respond to proposals and questions; at least one of these hearings will be held before the proposed consolidated plan is published for comment.

MEASURES TO ENHANCE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Measures to enhance citizen participation in the CDBG planning process include:

- When citizen participation is expected to exceed 10% non-English speaking persons, neighborhood outreach efforts, meetings and public hearings will include interpreters to meet the needs of the non-English speaking residents, primarily our Latino population, the largest minority group in the city at approximately 20%.
- Public hearings will generally be located in City Hall, 15 N. 3rd Ave, during City Council meetings. Council chambers are accessible to persons with disabilities. Public meetings concerning development of the CPP and the CDBG Consolidated Plan will be held in buildings accessible to disabled persons.
- Upon reasonable notice, the city will make efforts to provide notices and summaries of information in other languages and will make efforts to provide accommodations for persons with disabilities. To arrange for such assistance,

requests must be made to the Support Services Department, (509) 527-4540, at least five working days prior to the scheduled public hearing or meeting.

- A list of agencies, organizations and persons interested in updates throughout the planning and evaluation processes will be maintained by Support Services.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING DATES

Notice of public hearings dates will be accomplished by the following:

- Notices of public hearing dates will be published in the Union Bulletin at least (14) days prior to the hearings.
- An electronic copy of the notice will be sent to the mailing list of interested agencies and persons maintained by the Support Services Department.
- A copy of the notice will be posted on the Walla Walla City webpage.
- A copy of the notice will be posted at City Hall.

The notice will include the date, time, location, subject matter and how and to whom to submit comments.

COMMENTS ON THE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

The public will be advised of the availability of the draft Citizen Participation Plan and is invited to comment on it and amendments to it. A notice will be placed in the Union Bulletin providing thirty (30) days to comment. Comments may be sent in writing to the CDBG Coordinator, Support Services Department, 15 N 3rd Ave., Walla Walla, WA 99362.

COMMENTS ON THE CDBG CONSOLIDATED PLAN (AND AMENDMENTS)

The public will be advised of the availability of the draft CDBG Consolidated Plan and amendments to it. A notice will be placed in the Union Bulletin providing fifteen (15) days to comment. Comments may be sent in writing to the CDBG Coordinator, Support Services Department, 15 N 3rd Ave., Walla Walla, WA 99362.

COMMENTS ON THE ANNUAL ACTION PLAN (AND AMENDMENTS)

The public will be advised of the availability of the draft Annual Action Plan and is invited to comment on it and amendments to it. A notice will be placed in the Union Bulletin providing fifteen (15) days to comment. Comments may be sent in writing to the CDBG Coordinator, Support Services Department, 15 N 3rd Ave., Walla Walla, WA 99362.

COMMENTS ON THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT (AND AMENDMENTS)

The public will be advised of the availability of the draft Annual Performance Report and is invited to comment on it and amendments to it. A notice will be placed in the Union Bulletin providing fifteen (15) days to comment. Comments may be sent in writing to the

CDBG Coordinator, Support Services Department, 15 N 3rd Ave., Walla Walla, WA 99362.

AMENDMENTS, MINOR AND SUBSTANTIAL

From time to time, amendments to the CPP and CDBG Consolidated Plan will be necessary as conditions change. Amendments of a minor nature will be made as needed throughout the year. However, the public will be given a 30-day opportunity to comment on all substantial amendments to the plans.

A “substantial” amendment to the Consolidated/Annual Plan is defined as:

- A budget increase or decrease that is more than 10% of the grant allocation.
- A change in purpose, scope, general location, or intended beneficiaries or the addition of a new project.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND AVAILABILITY OF PLAN DOCUMENTS

During development of the CDBG Consolidated Plan, city staff will meet with community groups, agencies, organizations and citizens to provide information on the uses of the CDBG funds and to hear and discuss needs. In addition, city staff will discuss the components of the Plan including the needs assessment; the strategic plan; the Annual Action Plan; and any substantial amendments to those plans.

The city will provide reasonable and timely access by citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties to records and information on the CDBG Consolidated Plan (and previous Consolidated Plan documents) and the city’s use of the funds under the programs covered by the Plan. In addition, the city will provide information to the public during the planning processes on proposed activities; the amount of assistance available; the range of activities that may be undertaken; and estimates of the amount of funds that will benefit low and moderate income persons.

The Citizen Participation Plan; CDBG Consolidated Plan as adopted; the Performance Report; and all associated policy documents will be available to the public including in a form accessible to persons with disabilities upon request. The most recent documents will be available on the City of Walla Walla web page, <http://wallawallawa.gov>, and at the City Library, 238 E Alder, Walla Walla, WA 99362. These documents will also be available by contacting the Support Services Department at 527-4540.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The city may provide technical assistance to groups representing low and moderate income persons to assist them in understanding the requirements for developing proposals for funding assistance under the Consolidated Plan. Technical assistance may include referral to information sources; providing information on programs and activities; workshops; and one-one assistance.

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

Complaints concerning the CDBG Program; the Consolidated Plan; Annual Plan; or the Performance Report may be made to the CDBG Coordinator of the Walla Walla Support Services Department. All complaints made in writing will be responded to in writing within 15 days. Persons not satisfied with the response may write an appeal of the decision and request a review of the complaint by the Deputy City Manager of the City of Walla Walla. A written response conveying the results of the review to the complainant will be made in writing within 21 days of receipt of the appeal. All decisions of the Deputy City Manager will be final.

ANTI-DISPLACEMENT AND RELOCATION ASSISTANCE PLAN

The city Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan is intended to minimize the displacement of persons as a result of program activities and to assist any persons actually displaced. The policy is to minimize the adverse impacts of the displacement and discourage displacement unless it is clearly necessary to achieve the Plan's objectives. In the event that displacement is unavoidable, those displaced will receive the full benefits and assistance provided for under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, and HUD regulations. The full Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan is available upon request by contacting the Support Services Department and is included in the Consolidated Plan.